

### **REMARKS**

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested. Applicant thanks the Examiner for total consideration given the present application. Claims 1-12 were pending prior to the Office Action. No claims have been added through this reply. Claims 2-5 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter included therein. Therefore, claims 1 and 6-12 are pending. Claim 1 is independent. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the rejected claims in light of the remarks presented herein, and earnestly seeks a timely allowance of all pending claims.

#### **Claim Rejection - 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)**

Claims 1 and 6-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable by Thompson et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,810,401) in view of Nagao et al. (EP 0973106). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

#### **Argument 1 of 2: Features of claim 1 not disclosed by cited prior art**

In independent claim 1, the Examiner cited Thompson for the alleged disclosing the claimed feature of an “order information processing means for placing an order for the members using the estimate information and order application information including information regarding a customer, which is necessary for application of the order placement.” *Emphasis added.*

Therefore, in the claimed invention, the estimate information and order application information including information regarding a customer is used for actually placing an order, not a mere preparation of an order.

The claimed invention of independent claim 1 provides numerous benefits. For example, the specification (see line 13 of page 28 through line 5 of page 29) states:

“since the solar cell ordering system 50 provides the planning, estimate, and order placement of the photovoltaic power system based on the input of the customer, it is possible to largely save troubles compared to a conventional sales system. Further, in the invention, information for the customer is displayed and information from the customer is inputted, for instance, on the PC of the customer, which is connected to the solar cell ordering system 50 through a network and therefore, it is possible to provide the

planning, estimate, and order placement of the photovoltaic power system at any time. In the conventional sales system, limitation is generated in terms of time depending on schedules of the customer and sales rep. However, the solar cell ordering system 50 is not subject to such limitation. Accordingly, it is possible to shorten a length of time which takes until the installation of the photovoltaic power system.” *Emphasis added.*

In contrast to the claimed invention, Thompson merely discloses a method and system where the (end) result is a summed-up quote. Therefore, Thompson fails to explicitly mention “placing an order.” (See Thompson, line 13 of col. 13 and lines 3-4 and 33-36 of col. 16.)

Further, while Thompson discloses a field for “Terms of Payment” in the display, Thompson merely gathers information (including the terms of payment) in order to have as much information on the user before forwarding this information to the merchant and before moving forward with an actual sale, or more specifically, “placing an order.” (See Thompson, line 5 of col. 14.)

Therefore, Thompson fails to explicitly disclose an “order information processing means for *placing an order*.” While Nagao is not relied upon for this claimed feature, Nagao fails to make up for the deficiencies of Thompson.

Claim 1 is submitted to be allowable over Thompson and Nagao for at least the above reasons.

Dependent claims 6-12 are allowable for the reasons set forth above with regards to claim 1 at least based on their dependency on claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 1 and 6-12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Reconsideration and allowance of claims 1 and 6-12 are respectfully requested for at least the above reasons.

#### **Argument 2 of 2: Features of claim 1 not disclosed by cited prior art**

Applicants have amended independent claim 1 in order to move prosecution forward. Based on the amended features of the claimed invention of independent claim 1, the order application information includes information showing the visit request data to a sales representative (rep). The order information processing means determines whether the visit

request data to the sales rep is specified or not based on the order application information received by the order application information input means, and in a case where the visit request data is specified, the order information processing means creates the visit request information using the estimate information drawn up by the estimate creating means and the order application information sent from the order application information input means. This visit request information is sent to the sales rep by the sales rep dispatching means.

In this way, the visit request information is created after the order application information is inputted and sent to the order information processing means, and then the visit request information is sent to the sales rep. Accordingly, it is possible to remove a futile visit from the sales rep. Further, at the time when the visit request information is created, the estimate information has been already created. Accordingly, when the visit from the sales rep is required, at the visit time, it is possible to smoothly arrange in reference to the estimate information which has been already created.

The cited prior art (*i.e.*, Thompson and Nagao) fail to disclose such features and advantages of the amended claimed invention of independent claim 1. Therefore, claim 1 as amended is submitted to be allowable over Thompson and Nagao for at least the above reasons.

Dependent claims 6-12 are allowable for the reasons set forth above with regards to claim 1 at least based on their dependency on claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 1 and 6-12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Reconsideration and allowance of claims 1 and 6-12 are respectfully requested for at least the above reasons.

## **Conclusion**

Therefore, for at least these reasons, all claims are believed to be distinguishable over the combination of Thompson and Nagao, individually or in any combination. It has been shown above that the cited references, individually or in combination, may not be relied upon to show at least these features. Therefore, claims 1 and 6-12 are distinguishable over the cited references.

In view of the above remarks and amendments, it is believed that the pending application is in condition for allowance.

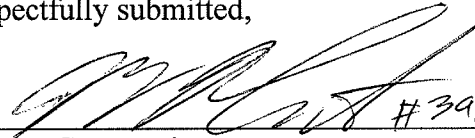
Applicant respectfully requests that the pending application be allowed.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Aslan Ettehadieh (Reg. No. 62,278) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Director is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge any fees required during the pendency of the above-identified application or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448.

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Respectfully submitted,

By  #39,991  
Charles Gorenstein  
Registration No.: 29271  
BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP  
8110 Gatehouse Road, Suite 100 East  
P.O. Box 747  
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747  
703-205-8000